(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of (b) above.

(e) and (f) Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) (Trust, Societies, Co-op. Societies) barring Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFC)-MFIs and not for profit Sec. 25 companies registered under Companies Act 1956, are governed by respective Acts under which they are formed. Only NBFC-MFIs and not for profit Sec. 25 companies registered under Companies Act 1956 fall under the purview of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

As per the existing instructions issued by the RBI to banks on micro finance, the interest rate applicable to loans given by banks to micro-credit organizations or by the micro-credit organizations to Self Help Groups/member beneficiaries would be left to their discretion.

Refund of income-tax

†2820. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of refund applications pending with the Income-tax Department especially in Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh, for the last three tax assessment years in the country;

(b) the reasons for delay in action against refund cases;

(c) the steps being taken to improve the situation; and

(d) the total amount refunded by the Income-tax Department during the last three financial years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) Assessment Year-wise data with respect to returns claiming refund is not maintained because the statutory time limit to process the return of income is with reference to their receipt in Financial Year. The total number of returns claiming refund pending with the Income Tax Department as on 1.4.2009 was 38.17 lakhs. Department has processed 27.93 lakhs returns claiming refund till 31st October, 2009. The number of returns claiming refund pending for processing in the Commissionerate of Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh is 2943.

(b) Processing of returns and issuance of refund is a continuous process in the Income Tax Department. According to the provisions of the Income Tax Act, 1961, the returns received during Financial Year 2008-09 can be processed upto 31st March, 2010. Normally, after receipt of returns, processing of returns and issuance of refund (if due) are done in due course. However, in some cases difficulties are encountered primarily due to the following reasons:-

(i) Wrong quoting of PAN by the assessee in the return of income.

(ii) Illegible recording of address in the return of income by the assessee,

(iii) Non-reporting of new/altered address by the assessee to the Assessing Officer,

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(iv) Incorrect particulars about bank account.

(v) Difficulty in verification of taxes paid or deducted, due to data mismatch.

(vi) Technical constraints like link failure, system overload, etc.

(c) To expedite the process of issue of refunds, some of the steps taken by the Department are:

(i) Mandatory Computerized processing of returns.

(ii) Introduction of e-filing of return for speedy processing.

(iii) The Department has up a Centralized Processing Centre at Bangaluru. It will provide speedy processing of returns and issuance of refunds for all the tax payers of Karnataka region and for all the e-filed returns.

(iv) Through Citizen's Charter and other press releases issued by the Department, tax payers are requested to carefully mention the relevant particulars in the return of income, more so about common deficiencies mentioned above.

(d) The total amount refunded during last three Financial Years is as follows:

Financial Year	Amount of Refund (in Rs. Crores)
2006-07	37313
2007-08	40742
2008-09	41122

Commodities in WPI basket

2821. SHRI SHYAMAL CHAKRABORTY:
SHRI MOINUL HASSAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of commodities taken in the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) basket;

(b) the names and number of primary articles, manufactured products and fuel and energy sources, each separately; and

(c) the base year for the current WPI series and how does Government determine WPI and set up their planning and budgetary formulation with very old base year and inaccurate yardstick for the current WPI?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) The total number of commodities, included in the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) basket (Base: 1993-94=100), is 435.

Composition of the commodity basket group-wise is indicated below: